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The author's is not the duty to show the service rendered to the world by the Jew through his religion. It is to tell the story of what he accomplished and how he lived in the *worldly* rôle that he was called upon to fill. The excellent division of the chapters has much to do in portraying this aspect of the subject, and a valuable index renders the storehouse of facts and fancies readily accessible.

The work is worthy of careful study, and takes its place by the side of the best of its kind.

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DIE CHRISTLICH-SOCIALEN IDEEN DER REFORMATIONENZEIT UND IHRE HERKUNFT. VON D. MARTIN VON NATHUSIUS, Professor der Theologie in Greifswald (= Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie, herausg. von A. Schlatter und H. Cremer, Vol. I, Heft 2). Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1897. Pp. v + 167. M. 2.40.

THE Reformation of the sixteenth century stands in close connection with the social movements of the three preceding centuries. These movements find expression in the various pre-Reformation sects which originated in a natural reaction against the heathenish condition of the church, none of them dating back to apostolic times. Most of these sects laid great stress on the Bible, some of them following its precepts in the most slavishly literal fashion. The idea of brotherhood was common to them all, some even being communistic. All opposed the external authority of the church, questioned her interpretation of the sacraments, and rejected her forms of worship. But they did not grasp the doctrine of evangelical freedom as preached by the apostle Paul. They united things spiritual with things secular and preached a kingdom of heaven on earth. All the sects alike fell into this error. This was the case with Arnold of Brescia; Dulcino and Savonarola in Italy; with Wickliff and John Balle in England; and with Huss in Bohemia. This was also the trouble with all of the German movements. Luther was the first to define correctly the doctrine of evangelical freedom. He kept the sphere of the gospel and the sphere of earthly interests properly apart. He declared that the freedom of the gospel had nothing to do with freedom in social affairs. Yet he recognized that the progress of the gospel would promote freedom.

But Luther was misunderstood. What he uttered against the

oppressed conscience was soon used against all oppression. Among the first to do this were Carlstadt and the Zwickau prophets. They also sought to enforce their teachings by means of violent methods. Luther was uncompromisingly opposed to this. He deprecated violence. He was also opposed to calling what they preached the gospel. He accused Carlstadt of not understanding evangelic freedom at all, and of knowing nothing but the example of Jesus. Ickelsamer was, like Carlstadt, a mere advocate of outward conformity to Jesus. Eberlin was more evangelical. This man recognized the need of individual regeneration, and was also a warm friend of the people and an earnest champion of various social reforms. Jacob Strauss was of the same mind with Eberlin, but far less practical. Thomas Münzer, the leader of the peasants, came to occupy a standpoint totally opposite to that of Luther. He was a man of earnest spirit; certainly no criminal, as the peasants which he led were no criminals. What they demanded was reasonable. Luther granted that, but he objected to their basing these demands on the ground of religion, and not rather on that of human and natural right, and he also objected, even more vigorously, to making it a part of religion to violently enforce these demands. Luther had no sympathy with revolutionists, yet the various risings of the Reformation period were unquestionably occasioned by the preaching of Luther. The revolutionists of the Reformation were the lineal descendants of the heretical sects of the three preceding centuries which, suppressed for a time, were emboldened through the preaching of Luther to raise their heads again.

Thus two tendencies run through this whole period. The sects before the Reformation, the Zwickau prophets, the peasants led by Thomas Münzer, Ickelsamer, Strauss, and several others, mixed earthly things with spiritual things; while Luther and those who followed him, true to the teachings of Scripture, kept the sphere of the gospel and the sphere of earthly interest apart.

These are the main thoughts of this very interesting book. The subject deserves much fuller treatment, but the book is timely and valuable so far as it goes. The author's positions are in the main correctly taken. He shows a fine philosophic grasp on history. His estimate of the movements prior to the Reformation is especially good. His interpretation of Luther's position toward social matters is excellent. But we do not agree with him in holding that Luther occupied a strictly scriptural position. We believe that Jesus had very distinctly a social order in mind when he proclaimed the kingdom of

heaven. Nor do we believe, with our author, that "nothing is more harmful to the gospel than to mix it with earthly interests."

That it was *expedient* in Luther's day to keep "the sphere of the gospel and the sphere of earthly interest" apart is perhaps true. But every age is not like Luther's age. There was a time when it was expedient to allow the granting of bills of divorce, but our Savior said that in his day that time had gone by. The absolute best is not always the most expedient. "The hardness of the human heart" must be considered. Especially is this important when one tries to bring the teachings of a past leader to bear on modern problems. The author, in showing the inexpediency of "mixing the gospel with earthly interests," as he calls it, in the days of Luther, assumes that it would be very harmful for all time to come; a conclusion which we believe to be as harmful as it is unscriptural.

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BILDER AUS DER LETZTEN RELIGIÖSEN ERWECKUNG IN DEUTSCHLAND. By RUDOLF BENDIXEN. Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke, 1897. Pp. 444. M. 4.

THIS is one of those rare books in which one never tires of reading. It is a series of sketches of the lives and the work of fifteen persons providentially raised up to withstand the rising tide of rationalism in Germany, and to reintroduce into the country the simple principles of a pure evangelical faith. The period of their activity lies almost wholly within the first forty years of the present century, and is connected, more or less directly, with the new life among the people aroused by the successful wars for independence. We have brief but satisfactory biographies of Friedrich Perthes, E. M. Arndt, G. H. von Schubert, Heinrich Steffens, Klaus Harms, Ludwig Hofacker, J. E. Gossner, Aloys Henhöfer, August Tholuck, August Neander, Philipp Spitta, Gottfried Menken, F. A. Krummacher, Theodor Fliedner, and Amalie Sieveking. These biographies appeared originally in the *Kirchenzeitung*, a journal established in the early part of the century by Hengstenberg, of Berlin, but for many years now under the editorial charge of Professor Luthardt, of Leipzig. The author signs himself as *Diakonus in Grimma*. He writes modestly, clearly, and with evident mastery of his subject. One feels, in reading his articles, that one is following a safe guide.